

Appl. No. 10/091,380  
Amdt. dated October 7, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of July 22, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 11 - 24 25 are pending in this application with claim 24 being amended.

In the Office Action, claim 24 was said to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Therefore, claim 24 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 11. It is respectfully submitted that claim 24 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 11-13, 16, 18-29, 21 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Maue et al (US 5,785,532) for the reasons stated in the Office Action.

The present claimed invention recites an instrument panel for a motor vehicle comprising at least one electronic component which is arranged on a carrier and/or one plug part. Electrical leads are conductively connected to the electronic component and/or the plug part. The carrier (3, 10, 19) has protruding contact pins (6, 13, 22, 23) which are connected to the electronic component (4, 11, 21) and/or to the plug part (14, 20). The electrical leads (7, 15, 24) are attached to the contact pins (6, 13, 22, 23).

Maue et al. disclose a power distribution box extending through a bulkhead of an automotive vehicle. Figure 3 of Maue et al. illustrates an "instrument panel for a motor vehicle comprising at least one electronic component which is arranged on a carrier". Furthermore, Figure 3 of Maue et al. illustrates "electrical leads which are conductively connected to the electronic component", and the "carrier" has "protruding contact pins". However, Maue et al. neither disclose nor suggest that "the electrical leads are attached to the contact pins" as in the present claimed invention. Additionally, in Figure 2, Maue et al. disclose electrical leads 80 connected to plugs 26. However, Maue et al. neither disclose nor suggest that these plugs 26 are connected to the printed circuit board (Figure 3, element 114). Furthermore, Maue et al. neither disclose nor suggest that the plugs 26 are connected to the pins 130. However, even if one assumes that the plugs 26 disclosed in Figure 2 are plugged into the pins 130 as disclosed in Figure 3, Maue et al. still neither disclose nor suggest the present invention as claimed in claim 11. Maue et al. neither disclose nor suggest the electrical leads being connected directly to the pins as in the present claimed invention. In fact, Maue et al. disclose the electrical leads 80 are directly connected to the plug element 26, which may be plugged onto the pins 130. This is unlike the present claimed invention wherein, as is clearly stated in claim 11 and on pages 4 - 5 of the specification, a plug part 12 having a contact pin 13 is attached to the carrier 10 and that an end of the electrical lead 15 is wound around the contact pint 13.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Maue et al. As claims 12 - 13, 16, 18 - 20, 21 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12 - 13, 16, 18 - 20, 21 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-13, 15-21 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Viertel et al (US 5,203,623) on the grounds set forth in the Office Action.

Viertel et al. discloses a frame which could be identified as an "instrument panel" (see Figure 2). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiners interpretation of Viertel et al. Specifically, the Examiner states that the carrier is the plastic body of the visor and the microswitch and the further identified the microswitch 29 as an electronic component. If the microswitch 29 is intended to be the electronic component than microswitch 29 is both the electronic component and the carrier. According to the features of claim 11 of the present invention, the electronic component is arranged on a carrier. This carrier may be only a part of the instrument panel. The "carrier" according to Figure 2 of Viertel therefore does not have "protruding contact pins" but only a plastic holder 28. Applicant is unclear why the Examiner views the microswitch 29 as a "carrier" with "protruding pins" as the description clearly discloses that the microswitch is an electronic component (see column 2, lines 43 - 66).

Furthermore, according to Viertel et al., the microswitch 29 (electrical component), has the "protruding contact pins", not the "carrier" as in the present claimed invention. Viertel et al. neither disclose nor suggest having the electrical leads attached to the contact pins as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Viertel et al. As claims 12 - 13, 15 - 21 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12 - 13, 15 - 21 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-13, 18-23 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Ha (US 5,584,208) for the reasons stated in the Office Action.

Ha discloses a "motor vehicle" with an "instrument panel 39". The "electronic components 20" are arranged on the "instrument panel 39". Thus, the instrument panel is analogous to the carrier of the present claimed invention. Electrical leads 22 in Ha are attached to the electronic components 20. From looking at Figure 1 of Ha, it may be possible to see "protruding contact pins". However, unlike the present claimed invention, the pins in Ha protrude from the electronic component 20. Ha neither discloses nor suggests the pins protruding from the carrier as in the present claimed invention. As the instrument panel 39 of Ha

is analogous to the carrier of the present claimed invention, it is clear that the instrument panel 39 of Ha does not have any contact pins.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Ha. As claims 12 - 13, 18-23 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12 - 13, 18-23 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Viertel et al (US 5,203,623) on the grounds set forth in the Office Action.

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to include winding the electrical lead ends around the contact pins. However, Viertal et al. neither disclose nor suggest having the contact pins protruding from the carrier as in the present claimed invention. Nor does Viertal et al. disclose or suggest having the electrical leads attached to the contact pins as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Viertel et al. adds nothing that would make the present claimed invention unpatentable. As claim is dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 is allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11.

Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

In the event there are further issues remaining in any respect the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone attorney to reach agreement to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Since the present claims set forth the present invention patentably and distinctly, and are not taught by the cited art either taken alone or in combination, this amendment is believed to place this case in condition for allowance and the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the matter, enter this amendment, and to allow all of the claims in this case.

Respectfully submitted,  
Winfried MOLL

by: \_\_\_\_\_  
MARTIN A. FARBER  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registered Representative  
Registration No. 22,345

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR SECTION 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that the accompanying Amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on October 7, 2003.

Dated: October 7, 2003

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MARTIN A. FARBER

866 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 758-2878